Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

life would have been too short. He has left cartoons and drawings of intended works, many of which are yet to be seen at Milan, and are in excellent preservation. Cartoons also of some of his finished paintings, which are very interesting and instructive, and especially a few containing the original designs of parts of the Last Supper, which go far towards supplying the deficiencies of the painting itself.

But of his finished and completed works, the galleries of the Continent show no small number. They are not so numerous as to be wearisome, they are numerous enough to place the artist amongst the very first masters of the Fifteenth Century. At the Louvre alone, there are works enough of Leonardo to entitle him to this acknowledged pre-eminence.

While at Milan, besides the execution of the Last Supper, and a vast number of smaller works of paintings, he employed himself in the preparation of an equestrian statue, intended to have been cast in bronze, of colossal dimensions, in memory of Francisco Sforza, father of Lodovico. The first model of the statue was unfortunately broken while being carried in a procession. The artist, undiscouraged, made a new one, but it was never cast. The troubles of Lodovico commenced—he was dethroned and imprisoned, and the learned men, of whom he had been the munificent patron, were dispersed to seek other fortunes. Leonardo returned to Florence at the age of about fifty. There he remained several years—years of laborious industry and success. The most important event of this period of his life was a work which he executed as a competitor with Michael Angelo, for the decoration of the Council Hall in the Palazzo Vecchio. This competition brought to a focus the rivalry of the two Masters. Leonardo, twenty-two years the senior of Michael Angelo, and the acknowledged head of his profession, did not receive from his younger brother in art the respect which, from every other quarter, was heaped upon him. Both were sensitive, capricious, and exacting. Both, if not jealous of others, were tenacious of their own eminence. In a word, both were Artists.

Just at this moment, the Commission from the city for a cartoon for the Palazzo Vecchio was announced. Each prepared his design, conscious of the powers of his rival. Leonardo chose for his subject the Defeat of the Milanese General, Niccolo Piccinino, by the Florentine army in 1440. Michael Angelo chose the same battle but at a different point of time, the commencement instead of the close. The two cartoons were finished and exhibited; Leonardo's was preferred, and his vanity spared the infliction of a failure. But both works have perished, and posterity is unable to confirm or disapprove the judgment of the Florentine Council.

About 1514 Leonardo went to Rome; there he painted a fresco in the convent of St. Onofrio, which still survives, and, amongst other works, the famous "Modesty and Vanity," now in the Sciarra Palace, and one of the most exquisite pictures in Rome.

A happy and tranquil old age awaited the artist. Since the troubles of Lodovico, his friend and patron, he had had no fixed home, and could find no congenial retreat. From Florence to Rome, his annoying rival, Michael Angelo, had also migrated, and he found himself less in favor with Leo X. than his position and merit demanded. He went to Paris, where Francis I. was at that time (1515) holding his court. The youthful monarch eagerly embraced the opportunity of attaching the veteran artist to himself, and removing him to France. He received him with every mark of respect, and gave him a pension for life of seven hundred gold crowns per annum. When the Court removed from Paris, Leonardo followed his new patron. His declining days were spent in the vicinity of the French capital, with no other duties than that of supporting the honor of being painter to the King of France. He did not paint, however, more than two or three—if as many—pictures, during his French residence. He solaced his old age by religious meditations and the discharge of pious duties, withdrawing almost entirely from the world, which in his youth he had so much enjoyed, and for the command of whose honors and gratifications Nature had so amply endowed him.

In the month of May, 1519, he died, at Cloux, near Amboise, in the 68th year of his age. His death has received the benefit of the same kind of traditional fiction which embellished some of the incidents of his life, for, according to the commonly received account, he died in the arms of Francis I., who had come to visit him at his house. This is not so. The fact is, that the King was at St. Germain en Laye, on the day of Leonardo's death, and his last moments were not honored by the presence of royalty. Even had it been so, how little would it have added to the fame of the artist, a monarch himself of wider sway and kinglier sceptre. W. A. B.

SELECTIONS.

PROFESSOR LESLIE'S LECTURES ON PAINTING.

LECTURE IV.

I propose this evening to continue the consideration of Invention and Expression, confining my observations to the works of some of the leading artists of the British school.

I have remarked on a former occasion that the adoption of a subject immediately and entirely from Nature has every claim to the honor of an invention. Indeed, incidents so derived are often among an artist's best inventions; and would painters look more attentively at what lies about them, in their walks, and by their fire-sides, for stories, attitudes, and expressions, the average of Art might be greatly raised above its ordinary level. But we are apt to value least that which we obtain the most easily; and it is probable that West, while engaged on a small picture of his own family, little dreamed that he was doing something which would surpass in interest many of his more ambitious works.

This simple and beautiful composition is an admirable version of the often-repeated subject, 'The Ages of Human Life.'—and of which I noticed, in my last address to you, Titian's picture in the collection of the Earl of Ellesmere. Yet here the theme is treated in a manner wholly unlike that of any other picture of the subject, and the difference arises from another purpose, which was indeed the first object of the painter, namely, to group on his canvas with himself those who were nearest and dearest to him; and with this intention, he has availed himself of the first visit of his aged father and a half-brother to his young wife, after the birth of his second child. The seniors, who are plain Quakers, adhering to the custom of their Society, have not removed their hats on entering the room. They are sitting for a few minutes in silent meditation, the result of which may be a prayer or a few serious words addressed by the Patriarch of the family to the parents of the babe. In the young mother, whose thoughts are all on her infant as it lies on her lap, the purest of all earthly affections is most sweetly expressed,—and the whole, forms one of those calm scenes of happiness on the recollection of which all who have enjoyed them are fond of dwelling as they proceed in the journey of life.

It was remarked by Stothard that there was nothing more difficult than to paint people doing nothing:—the great difficulty, indeed, of portraiture. How admirably it is overcome in the instance before us I need not remark,—if they can be said to be doing nothing whose minds are occupied by the thoughts that such an occasion has called up. Stothard's observation indeed applies less to such subjects than to the supernumerary figures and groups in extensive compositions like that of 'The Oath of Leo the Tenth,' one of Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican, which is very rarely spoken of on account of its want of interest; but which affords, nevertheless, an admirable lesson of Invention, and, I may add, of Expression to the painter.

The liberty has often been taken by artists, and allowed by critics, of deviating from the exact relation of a story, whether of fiction or history, if by so doing the perspicuity or interest of the work can be increased. By such an allowance, Raphael, in the cartoon of 'Annanias,' has introduced Sapphira, counting the gains of her husband and herself, while he is still struggling in the pangs of death; though the history expressly tells us that three hours had elapsed between the moment of his punishment and the entrance of his wife;—and in the 'Transfiguration,' though, as Fuseli has shown, he has not united two acts of the Saviour in one moment (for the possessed boy is only brought for cure, and not cured)—yet he has certainly connected the subjects of the upper and lower portions of the picture more closely than Scripture warrants.

Other illustrations of this privilege of Art, and some perhaps less questionable than the last, might be furnished. But these are sufficient as examples of the use of the license; while the 'Macbeth' of Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted for the Boydell Gallery, is a striking instance of the violation of the unities of a subject, and, as I think, greatly to its disadvantage. He has brought together the apparitions of the armed head, of the bloody child, of the child crowned and with a tree in his hand, and of the eight kings followed by Banquo. Ineffectiveness of the entire picture is the result of this confusion. Fuseli would not have treated it in this manner. Indeed, the subject itself is one to which his powers were much better suited than those of Reynolds. For Hecate, he would not have given us a toothless hag—and even his color would have been more in accordance with the scene. Fuseli was as superior to other painters in the unreal as he was inferior to the best in the real. It seems, indeed, as if his imagination had gone into the world of shadows, and was prohibited from any return. Reynolds, in the possession of so large a space of Art, in which he was scarcely ever approached, could well afford the concession of such subjects to another.

The two pictures (painted for Alderman Boydell,) by Fuseli, from the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' are full of the moft playful invention. In the first, Titania is enamoured of Bottom,—in the second, she is awakened from her delusion. In availing himself of the power of fairies to take what shape they please, he has allowed his fancy a wide scope, and has even introduced something of modern costume in such a manner as to add greatly to the whimsicality of the scene. In the first of these pictures, the affected prudery of the two powdered and yet visionary ladies-in-waiting of the fairy queen, with their high feathers, and kerchiefed to the chin, is very amusing, the staid formality of their attitudes being evidently intended as a silent rebuke on their mistress. In the foreground a maid of honor holds a greybeard dwarf in leading-strings. A hideous child intended as a changeling, is supported by an ancient figure enveloped in a dark mantle,—and as a contrast, on the opposite side of the picture, sits Moth, a most beautiful little fairy, whose admirably contrived head-dress proclaims his identity.*

But as my present purpose is to speak of British Art, I cannot yet leave Reynolds,—for I wish particularly to notice the superior felicity of his inventions, for so I shall call them, that were suggested entirely by the life about him,—in doing which I shall confine myself to his portrait compositions, where indeed he is generally more original than in his fancy pictures.—Of these (his portraits I mean) there are two classes, as far as incident is concerned,—the one imaginative, the other natural.—The first comprises his pictures of ladies sacrificing to Hymen or to the Graces,—or in character, as Mrs. Billington or Mrs. Sheridan as St. Cecilia, and of this class is the grandest female portrait he ever painted, perhaps the grandest in the world—'Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse.'†

I remember when objections were made to the chair on the clouds, to the dress not being classical, &c., but such criticism has long been silent before this matchless work, a work which at once dissipates every suspicion, and such suspicions have been expressed, of

* This fine picture, which has the visionary negative color in which Fuseli was so happy, is in the possession of Mr. Gibbons. Its companion belongs to that gentleman's brother.

† In the Gallery of the Marquis of Westminster. The copy at Dulwich may have been touched by Sir Joshua, but it is altogether greatly inferior.

the sincerity of Sir Joshua's admiration of Michael Angelo. Where the portrait painter is so fortunate as to meet with such a subject in nature, and has the far greater good fortune to possess the power of dealing with it, there is every reason for such an ideal treatment. But in ordinary cases the later practice, as I think it was, of Reynolds, of allowing the sitter to suggest the attitude (unconsciously I mean) is a very safe one, and by far the most likely to lead to originality.

Numberless are the instances that might be selected from the works of Sir Joshua of happy thoughts thus derived. Mrs. Abington looking over the back of her chair, Lady Fenoulhet sitting down, with her bonnet on, and her hands in her muff, as if just returned from a walk,—and that inimitable one of the near-sighted Baretti devouring his book. But the most charming specimen of this mode of treatment is the Strawberry Hill picture, in which the three beautiful sisters, the Ladies Waldegrave, are sitting together at a table,—one drawing, and another winding a skein of silk held by the third. This is worth all the 'Sacrifices to the Graces' in the world,—and it was by this perception of the use to which taste may turn the every day incidents of life that Reynolds became the great restorer of portraiture to Nature.

"I remember," said Northcote, "once going through a suite of rooms where they were showing me several fine Vandykes; and we came to one where there were some children by Sir Joshua, seen through a door. It was like looking at the reality, they were so full of life; the branches of the trees waved over their heads and the fresh air seemed to play on their cheeks. I soon forgot Vandyke!"† Not, however, that Vandyke can ever be displaced,—and nothing was farther from the expectation of Reynolds than that his own works were ever likely to be preferred; for I have heard Northcote say, that often when applied to by young painters for permission to copy his pictures, Sir Joshua strongly recommended to them rather to copy something of Vandyke. But it may certainly be said that the attitudes of Vandyke,—so much more formal and studied than those of Holbein, of Titian, or of Raphael, in portraiture,—and particularly the affectation of his hands, led to the still greater affectation and formality of the portrait painters who succeeded him,—and from which it was reserved for Reynolds at once to liberate the art.

It has been said that the accidental perusal of Richardson's book made Reynolds a painter. My own belief is that he read Richardson with interest, because his mind was instinctively turned towards Painting more than to any other pursuit. Thousands of lads would have taken up the book and laid it down without reading a page, for one that would have devoured it as he did. I can well conceive the extreme interest with which he must have read one remarkable passage in Richardson—and who can say that the prophecy which it contains may not have operated on the mind of the young Reynolds, in whom ambition was a ruling passion, so as to have contributed in some degree towards its own fulfilment? The passage is as follows:—"I have said it heretofore and will venture to repeat it, notwithstanding the national vanity of some of our neighbors and our own false modesty and partiality to foreigners—*if ever the great taste in Painting, if ever that delightful, useful, and noble Art does revive in the world it is probable 'twill be in England.*—Besides that greatness of mind which has always been inherent in our nation, and a degree of solid sense not inferior to any of our neighbors, we have advantages greater than is commonly thought. We are not without our share of drawings of which Italy has been in a manner exhausted long since. We have some fine antiques and a competent number of pictures of the best masters. But whatever our number or variety of good pictures is, we have the best history pictures now in being, for we have the Cartoons of Raphael; and for portraits we have admirable ones, of Raphael, Titian, Rubens, and, above all, of Vandyke, of whose we have very many. In ancient times we have frequently been subdued by foreigners; the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans have all done it in theirs; those days are at an end long since; and we are by various steps carried to the height of military glory by sea and land. Nor are we less eminent for learning, philosophy, mathematics, poetry, strong and clear reasoning, and a greatness and delicacy of taste; in a word, in many of the liberal and mechanical arts we are equal to any other people, ancients or moderns, and in some perhaps superior. We are not yet come to that maturity in the Arts of Design; our neighbors, those of nations not remarkable for excelling in this way, as well as those that are, have made frequent and successful inroads upon us, and have *lorded* it over our natives here in their own country. Let us at length disdain as much to be in subjection in this respect as in any other; let us put forth our strength and employ our national virtue, that haughty impatience of subjection and inferiority which seems to be characteristic of our nation, in this as on many other illustrious occasions, and the thing will be effected: *the English school will rise and flourish!*"

I trust I need not apologize for quoting at length the words of the patriotic old painter. They were printed in 1719, about eleven years before Hogarth's genius shone forth in the pictures of the Harlot's Progress, and four years before Reynolds was born.

If, in speaking of the British school, a strict attention to chronology had been necessary, Hogarth should have been mentioned first, for he preceded Reynolds, as Reynolds did West. But in point of fact the reputation of Hogarth, as it is now established, is later than that of either. He could scarcely sell his matchless pictures at the lowest prices, and his first eulogist among people of fashion, Horace Walpole, denied his merit as a painter. Walpole begins his account by speaking of Hogarth as one whom he chose to consider "rather as a writer of comedy with the pencil than as a painter," and throughout his essay he continues invariably to call him "this *author*." A Rev. Mr. Gilpin, also writing near the time of Hogarth, represents him as ignorant of composition. I donbt indeed whether Hogarth's entire excellence was fully felt by the public until his works were collected in 1814, and exhibited at the Gallery of the British Institution.

It was then seen how great a master he was in all respects. How completely he bent the Art to his will; and though alive to all the beauties of painting and neglecting none of them, yet how steadily he kept in view the true end of Art—in no case ever permitting a minor excellence in any way to interfere with his story or expression. The purity of his color was then acknowledged, as well as that zest of execution, which tells us that painting was far more a pleasure than a labor to him.

And here allow me to quote an author who has expressed, much better than I can, the value of Hogarth's art. Sir Martin Shee, says: "Hogarth has conferred that kind of obligation on his country which peculiarly entitles him to her regard and gratitude. Civilized nations have ever eagerly contended for the honor of originality in arts and sciences; and have considered as their most conspicuous ornaments those extraordinary characters, who, starting from the common herd of mankind, seem born to explore new regions and discover new springs of instruction and amusement. Among the few who come under this description, Hogarth has every claim to be numbered; his genius appears to be as peculiarly original, his fire to be as much kindled from within as that of any other painter of any other age or nation. From his outset he disdained to travel in the high roads of Art, or to avail himself of those directing posts set up by his predecessors; he treads in no man's steps, moves within no prescribed limits and adopts no established combinations: he has perhaps less of common-place than any other artist; less of loose material; less dead matter. His subjects, his arrangements, his characters, his style, his manner, are all his own, derived immediately from Nature; drawn pure from the fountain, without passing through those ducts and channels of intermediate communication which always tinge the stream and betray the soil through which it flows. His path of Art before him was unopened, and it appears to have closed after him. But while his works remain to be consulted, Britain may confidently boast of having produced one of those distinguished, those daring navigators of the intellectual ocean who launch boldly forth in quest of new discoveries, and bring home unexpected treasures from territories before unknown."

This eloquent passage from one of the notes to the "Rhymes on Art," was printed in 1805.

Tragedy and comedy are united by Hogarth with the same truth to Nature, and the same relief of each other by contrast, with which they are united by Shakspeare. The skilful management of contrast, indeed is a great principle in the inventions of Hogarth; thus, in the prison scene in "The Rake's Progress," where the foreground groups present nothing but misery, and the infuriated wife of the spendthrift is in the act of striking her wretched husband, while the poor woman whom in early life he had ruined, and who has followed him to prison, is in a fit—an open space between these groups shows us the figure of an alchemist tranquilly engaged with his furnace and crucibles, whose deep and quiet abstraction is of the higest value in the way of relief, and so likewise is the introduction of the poor author, who is helping to recover the fainting woman, while his scheme for paying the debts of the nation drops from his hand. I need not point out the admirable and exquisitely humorous contrasts of physiognomy throughout Hogarth's pictures, a principle that very much escaped the Dutch painters with the exception of Jan Steen.

In the treatment of accessories, Hogarth stands alone. How much of meaning and of humor is there in the display of the articles purchased at auction by Lady Squanderfield from the collection of Sir Timothy Babyhouse, and with which her negro page is amusing himself. The termination of this group of curiosities in a most extraordinary little nondescript quadruped, is ludicrous in the extreme. The collection of hats, also, on the floor in the second plate to the "Analysis of Beauty," how comical and how full of character it is! We fancy a face to every hat.

The ingenuity with which he often makes the most apparently trifling objects in his pictures tell a story or suggest a moral, and frequently in the obscured corners of his compositions, is equally without a parallel. Indeed, after we have made ourselves acquainted with all his leading incidents, there is scarcely one of his compositions in which, if we search diligently, we shall not find latent touches of the highest relish,—small objects serving a double and sometimes a treble purpose. In the marriage scene in the Rake's Progress in which the hero, having dissipated his patrimony, appears at the altar with an ancient heiress, we are shown the interior of Old Marylebone Church, at that time standing in an out-of-the-way part of the suburbs, and, therefore, resorted to for stolen marriages, or marriages of which either of the parties had any reason to be ashamed, The church, a very small one, is in a neglected condition, and cracks in the walls, mildew and cobwebs, would occur to an ordinary painter; but Hogarth has shown a fracture running through the table of the Commandments,—the Creed is defaced by damp, and he has placed a cobweb over the opening of the the charity box. Again, an empty phial labelled "laudanum" lies at the feet of the expiring viscountess in the last scene of the 'Marriage a-la-Mode;' but this was not enough, he has placed close to it the "last dying speech of Counsellor Silver-Tongue," suggesting that it was the death of her lover and not of her husband that caused her to swallow poison.

His ingenuity is endless in the expression of whatever he wishes to convey. In the din of street noises which his enraged musician tries, in vain, to shut out of his ears, he unites the sounds of a dustman's bell, a ballad singer, a haut-boy-player, a knife-grinder, a paviour, &c. Not far off is the sign of a pewterer, and then, in the distance, he shows us that the church bells are ringing, by the flag that waves from the steeple.

There is no surer test of a painter's feeling for Nature than the manner in which he represents childhood. In Hogarth we often find the same charm, arising from its want of sympathy with grown-up life, that I have noticed in the works of Raphael. The Boy Mourner, in the picture of the 'Harlot's Funeral,' winding up his top, "the only person in that assembly," as Lamb remarks, "that is not a hypocrite," is an instance of this, and so is the same boy in the preceding picture, the dying scene. The pretty little girl in the 'Election Entertainment,' who is examining the ring on the fine gentleman's finger, and the two little urchins creeping slowly to school, through Covent Garden Market, their very short footsteps marked in the snow, in his picture of 'Morning,' are also exquisite specimens of childhood.

There is a charming picture by Hogarth at Holland House, in which children are the principle personages. It represents the private performance of a play at the house of Mr. Conduit, the Master of the Mint, before the Duke of Cumberland and a few other people of rank and fashion. Three girls and a boy are on the the stage, and seem to be very seriously doing their best; but the attitude and expression of one little girl on a front seat among the audience is matchless. She is entirely absorbed in the performance, and she sits bolt upright and will sit, we are sure, immoveably, to the end of the play, enjoying it as a child only can, and perhaps even the more because the actors are children. The picture is beautifully colored, and is one of those early works painted by Nature, the execution of which prepared the way to Hogarth's greater efforts.

Coleridge notices that Hogarth, "in whom the satirist," as he says, "never extiguishes that love of beauty which belonged to him as a Poet, often introduces a beautiful female as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities; which figure, such is the power of true genius, neither acts nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter; and thus prevents the instructive merriment of the whims of Nature from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred."

So difficult is it, and in many cases so impossible, for a painter to explain his entire meaning on canvas, that it is to be regretted Hogarth did not leave a written key to his stories, in which, in a very few words, he might have guarded against all doubt as to the more important passages in them, that are involved in ob-

† Hazlitt's 'Conversations of Northcote.'

scurity; which, after all, are very much fewer than might have been expected in narratives so rich in incident. The third picture of the series of the "Marriage a-la-Mode," is the one which has, more than any other of his works, puzzled his commentators. For my own part, I cannot but think that it has a deeper meaning than has generally been supposed. I believe the expression of the elder female to be that of jealousy. On no other ground can her furiously vindictive look be accounted for. The indignation of the viscount is directed against the quack only, for he would not lift his cane to a woman. She is still in the prime of life, and with a face which, though now distorted with passion, we may imagine, in a calmer mood, to be handsome. The clasp knife, which she holds out of sight, is intended for her rival, and Hogarth, as I think, meant to show how vices that the world considers comparatively venial, often lead to the blackest crimes.

Hazlitt has certainly mistaken the painter's meaning in the young girl, the object as I believe of this woman's rage. He says—"Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the extreme softness of her person and the hardened indifference of her character." The truth is she is a child, not hardened by vice, for she is too young, but the victim to a refinement in infamy imported from a country of which the then reigning sovereign set the example. There can be little doubt but the quack, who is a Frenchman, is the pimp in this case, and viewing the subject in this light, the story seems to me to be quite clear. Hogarth saw with honest indignation how much more readily the fashionable world (as it is called) of England has always adopted the corruption of the continental countries rather than their refinements or their virtues—and he never lost an opportunity of exposing this base species of imitation.

I fancy I see much more in this poor child than "docility to vice." The finery with which she has been loaded, like a victim for sacrifice, is evidently that of some elder predecessor, for the dress she wears is much too long for her. This child and that of the the viscountess herself, in the last picture, are alike, though in different ways,—intended to show the irreparable evils so often inflicted on the innocent by the thoughtlessness of the vicious. The iron on the leg of the little girl in the last picture tells a sad tale of inherited infirmity and neglect.

And yet Hogarth, who painted these things, has been charged with prostituting his art at the suggestion of a vicious patron, though it has been added that he afterwards repented having done so. The latter assertion cannot however, be true, for he not only published engravings of the only two of his pictures considered objectionable,—but when the plates were worn he retouched them, and continued to sell the impressions to the end of his life.

That Hogarth, the uncompromising satirist of the vices of all classes, who lashed the old masters for appealing to the passions in subjects taken from the scandalous chronicle of Olympus,—that Hogarth, manly and thoroughly English as was his nature,—should thus desecrate his art, would involve a degree of inconsistency from the charge of which I should be glad to relieve his memory; and I think this may be done, though I am aware that in attempting it I am venturing on hazardous ground.

The pictures in question tell a tale, as I think, of seduction and desertion, in a manner far more calculated to excite compassion for the victim and detestation for her betrayer than any feeling of levity, and indeed with much less of grossness, as the commentators on them acknowledge, than may be found in many of his other works against the tendency of which no objection has ever been made. If his mode of treating these subjects, his mode, indeed, of treating all, is one which would not be tolerated in the present state of taste, I can only say that the taste of the present age tolerates very much in Art that is in reality, far more objectionable. He shows us in these pictures, that the mind of a young woman religiously brought up has been corrupted, previous to her ruin, by licentious books that have no doubt been furnished to her for that purpose; for in her table-drawer a Prayer-book and "The Practice of Piety," are mixed with books of an immoral tendency. In the first picture the falling looking-glass is very significant; its surface is bright and without a flaw—in the second picture it lies on the ground in fragments. Here she is in tears and evidently imploring that she may not be deserted—while it is evident from the countenance of her seducer that she has little to hope from his honor—he thinks of nothing but himself. There are touches of humor in these as in all Hogarth's works; but the impression they make is a very sad one, and I have not a doubt but that they were painted as well with the intention of warning the innocent against danger, as of awakening remorse in the guilty.

Sir George Beaumont presented Hogarth's mahlstick to Wilkie. I have heard that Sir George, having purchased it, determined to give it to the first young painter who should seem to him worthy to possess it. If this be true, the compliment was well deserved. Like Hogarth, Wilkie was the inventor of most of the stories he painted; and in these stories the intention, though not going near so far as that of Hogarth, was realized with exquisite truth and simplicity.

No better example can be pointed out to the young painter than that of the industry, the patience, and the devotion to Art recorded in the history of Wilkie's studies;—how he moved on, as his biographer says, "like the sunbeam on the wall, *slowly and brightly.*" The change in his style, from the delicate finish of his small works to the more general treatment of subjects of a large scale, was lamented by his admirers. It was a change, however, which he was obliged to make because his health no longer permitted that attention to minute detail which he had carried so very far. But the public is a hard taskmaster, and particularly to its favorites,—and it did not willingly forgive the alteration. Yet in the latter years of his life he produced some very great works, works which could they have been exhibited with a new name might perhaps have been more justly treated than they were by the critics of the present day:—such as the 'Preaching of John Knox,' the 'Columbus,' and the 'Interview between Pius the Seventh and Napoleon.' The masterly sketches made in those countries from which he was not destined to return, show how actively (too actively indeed) his fine mind had been engaged to the very last. Among them I remember one of the most fascinating representations of childhood I ever beheld,—the young daughter of Admiral Walker in an Eastern dress. It was as beautiful as anything of Reynolds or Gainsborough, and yet quite unlike either.

I believe all opinions will concur in placing Wilkie's subjects from familiar and rustic life, with few exceptions, highest among his works. Such were the pictures that first made his reputation—'The Village Politicians,' 'The Blind Fiddler,' 'The Rent Day,' 'Duncan Gray,' &c. Of this class, however, the most elaborately painted and the fullest in subject, 'The Village Festival,' in the National Gallery, is certainly not the one to which I should give the preference. For though that exquisite delicacy of touch which marks more or less every period of Wilkie's art is here seen in the greatest perfection, yet the picture seems to me, in all respects the most artificial of his earlier productions. It was a picture which gave him great trouble to paint, as is evident from his Diary.

Among Wilkie's scenes from domestic life, the two finest appear to me be 'The Penny Wedding' and the 'Distraining for Rent,' subjects of the most opposite character. 'The Penny Wedding' is equal to the 'Hallow-e'en' of Burns, or the inimitable description of rustic life in the 'Twa Dogs.' The joyousness and activity with which the reel is going on to the music of Neil Gow,—the simple feasting in the background where the grace is not forgotten,—and the satisfaction with which the Howdie, an important personage on such occasions, and the village doctor regard the scene, are inimitably given, and in a manner as far above all commonplace or vulgarity as it is free from anything of over-refinement. Wilkie in such subjects seems as if he were guided by the precepts of Polonius—"Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar." But in truth he was guided by his own gentility of nature.

We feel in looking at this picture as we feel in reading the poems of Burns to which I have compared it;—that such scenes can only be described by a painter or a poet born and bred north of the Tweed. This is the merit, and a sterling one it is, of Wilkie's two subjects from Allan Ramsay's 'Gentle Shepherd;' and which, notwithstanding a want of beauty in the female figures, make us regret that he had not painted more from the poetry of Scotland. An artist is always the better for being national.

The picture which I believe would be selected by painters from among all the works of Wilkie as the most perfect specimen of his art is that of the 'Whiskey still,' in the possession of Sir Willoughby Gordon. It is an extremely simple composition, containing but three figures. An old Highlander is holding up a glass of whiskey to the light, and seem to be smacking his lips with the relish of a perfect connoisseur, while a boy is pouring some of the spirit into a jug, and a man in the background is looking towards the Highlander. Not only in character, but in the entire treatment, in color and execution, this masterly work leaves nothing to be desired.

With much less truth of color his 'Distraining for Rent' displays dramatic powers of the very highest order. Of a picture so well known to you by Raimbach's fine engraving, I need say little; and, indeed, I know not how to say anything of its pathos that would not fall very far short of its impression. But I cannot help noticing the admirable manner in which Wilkie has introduced one of his subordinate figures, the man employed in writing an inventory of the furniture. The consciousness of how entirely he is an unwelcome visitor is shown in every circumstance connected with this figure. He seems desirous of occupying the smallest possible space. He has seated himself on the corner of the bedstead, and deposited his hat between that and his feet. He writes on a book held on his knees, and from an inkstand held in his hand, not venturing to ask for any more convenient mode of proceeding with what he has to do. The figure of the sheriff's officer is equally good. He withstands the storm of threats and reproaches with which he is assailed by the relations of the distressed family, and though he grasps his cudgel firmly, he keeps it somewhat out of sight and depends more on the writ he holds in his other hand for protection. How true to nature is the dog too that has taken refuge under his master's chair, and looks out from between his legs with great dissatisfaction towards the strangers whom he dares not attack. And then the two women—neighbours, near the door; the one silent and affected by the scene, the other a gossip who has left her own affairs to see what is going on elsewhere. She has the key of her house in her hand.

The picture Wilkie painted for the Duke of Wellington, for skill in composition and delicate completion of detail is one of his prominent works; and though the subject afforded far less scope than many of his others for dramatic power, there is not in the Art a finer touch of expression than that of the anxious face of the woman overlooking the old pensioner who reads to his companions the first news of the Battle of Waterloo. The contrast of this single face to all the others that surround the reader, is, indeed, a master-stroke.

While speaking of the English school I must not omit to notice a truly original genius, who though not a painter, was an artist of the highest order, in his way. I mean Thomas Bewick, the admirable designer and engraver on wood. His works, indeed, are of the smallest dimensions, but this makes it the more surprising that so much of interest could be comprised within such little spaces. The woodcuts that illustrate his books of natural history may be studied with advantage by the most ambitious votary of the highest classes of Art—filled as they are with a most refined taste and feeling for Nature, and though often representing the most ordinary objects, yet never, in a single instance degenerating into commonplace. The charming vignettes that ornament these books abound in incidents from real life diversified by genuine but extravagant humor, as well as by the truest pathos,—of which the single figure of a shipwrecked sailor saying his prayers on a rock, with the waves rising around him is an instance.

There is often in these little things, a deep meaning that places his art on a level with styles which the world is apt to consider as greatly above it; in proof of which I would mention the party of boys playing at soldiers among graves, and mounted on a row of upright tombstones for horses; while for quaint humor, extracted from a very simple source, may be noticed a procession of geese which have just waddled through a stream, while their line of march is continued by a row of stepping-stones.

The student of Landscape can never consult the works of Bewick without improvement. The backgrounds to the figures of his quadrupeds and his birds—and his vignettes have a charm of Nature quite his own. He gives us in these, every season of the year, and very often winter—snow pieces or groups skating. He is equally true in his little home scenes, his farm-yards and cottages, and in his wild coast scenery, with flocks of sea-birds wheeling round the rocks. In one of these subjects there stands a ruined church towards which the sea has encroached, the rising tide threatening to submerge a tombstone raised "to perpetuate the memory," &c.

Bewick resembles Hogarth in this, that his illustrations of the stories of others are not to be compared with his own inventions. His feeling for the beauties of Nature as they were impressed on him directly, and not at second hand, is akin to the feeling of Burns, and his own designs remind me, therefore, much more of Burns than the few which he made from the poet.

But to return to Painting. I should now be glad to say something, if I could say it in a manner worthy of the subject, of the art of Stothard.

For more than half a century this great ornament of our school was engaged in illustrating not only the contemporary literature of his country, but the works of her best poets, from the time of Chaucer to his own; his employers, with the exception occasionally of the goldsmiths, being the booksellers. Neglected as Stothard was by most of the professed patrons of Art of his day, he had one patron and sincere friend, whose friendship was indeed an honor—Mr. Rogers. By these he was engaged in every species of compositions from illustrations of Homer and Shakspeare, to designs for spelling-books and pocket almanacs, fashion, for the *Ladies' Magazine*, portraits of popular actors and actresses, in character, as well as other subjects of

the day, such as 'Balls at St. James's;' 'The Employments of the Royal Family;' 'The King going out with the Fox Hounds, &c.—numbers of his early designs are from novels and poems, the very names of which are now only preserved in his beautiful Art. By the goldsmiths he was employed in designing ornaments for plate from the Wellington Shield, to spoon-handles for George IV.

The species of his employment formed his style, which, resulting from the haste required by tradesmen, appeared slight and unsubstantial by the side of the works of artists who were enabled to give more time to their productions. His practice, also, limited the size of his works; and with people, therefore, who judge of pictures, in any degree, by the space they occupy on the walls of galleries, or the quantity of minute detail within that space, Stothard will rank as a painter of minor importance; while all who estimate Art by the soul that lives in it, will place him with the very few painters who have possessed imagination of the highest order, and have yet restrained themselves from over-stepping "the modesty of Nature."

It must, however, be acknowledged that it is in his smallest pictures and drawings only that we feel there is nothing more to be desired; when he repeated his subjects on a larger scale, which he sometimes did for the Exhibition, they have in general too much the character of magnified sketches. This may have made him say, near the close of his life, "I feel that I have not done what I might have done." Yet, perhaps, this is the feeling at last of every painter.

It is scarcely possible but that among the thousands of Stothard's productions repetitions of himself should not occur; nor that he should not occasionally have adopted ideas suggested by the Antique or by the old masters. He not seldom reminds us of Raphael, often of Rubens, and sometimes of Watteau; but he does so as one worthy to rank with them, and as they remind us of their predecessors. Yet his works will bear the deduction of every such instance of imitation, and of every repetition of himself, and we shall be surprised to see how much of the most beautiful original imagery will remain. His designs for the 'Novelist's Library' remind us of no other painter. In these, all is direct from Nature—and, as many of the novels in this collection were not very far in date from his own time, he gave the dresses of his day and the style of furniture.

These charming works gained him first the admiration, and then the friendship of Flaxman; for on seeing some of them in a shop-window, the great sculptor determined to make the acquaintance of an artist with whose taste his own was so nearly allied.

Stothard's illustrations of 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' sixteen in number, belong to the highest order of Sacred Art. Here are images of holiness, of purity, and of childlike innocence, worthy of that beautiful poem. And they are as graceful to the eye as to the mind, the Art entirely aiding the sentiment. The one from among them which I should select as peculiarly an effusion of Stothard's own mind, for I can see in it no resemblance to any other painter, is that in which Christian is received by Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity into the Palace Beautiful.*

Another series of Stothard's designs, and which, though quite distinct from these, is evidently one in which he took great delight, is that from 'Robinson Crusoe.' In looking at some of these one is almost more impressed with the solitude of the shipwrecked man than in reading the book.

His humor is as true and as delicate as that of Addison. His illustrations of the 'Spectator' are therefore perfect; but the picture in which he has displayed the most of discrimination of character is his 'Canterbury Pilgrims.' The personages of Chaucer all seem to pass before our eyes as if they were shown to us by a painter contemporary with the poet. If one has less of the real character than the rest, it is perhaps the Wife of Bath. She seems too young and too graceful for the merry dame who had buried five husbands. Yet he has well contrived to make it evident that her talk and laugh are loud, by their attracting the attention of those who are riding before and behind her, as well as of the persons closest to her.

Like Hogarth, Stothard rarely had recourse to the model in Painting. The truth is, that the minds of both were so completely filled with a store of imagery collected immediately from Nature, and so vividly was this store preserved, that they could at will select and embody on canvas whatever was most appropriate to the subject in hand. The operation of Painting is always an exercise of memory,—for even with a model in the room, the transfer of what the painter sees is but a recollection, and the difference between those who can only paint with models at hand, and those who, like Hogarth and Stothard, and many, no doubt, among the old masters (of whom Michael Angelo must certainly have been one) can draw on the stores of their minds for their models—the difference between such is only that the latter class have the power of retaining images longer in their memories than others—a power no doubt in a great degree to be acquired. Hogarth tells us that he set himself to acquire it,—and he certainly did so to an extraordinary extent. He belonged to a very different class of painters from those who sit at home and consult engravings, or their copies of pictures, for precedents. His habits seem to have been anything but sedentary,—and I know that Stothard's were not. When not engaged at his easel, his time was almost always spent in long walks through the streets and suburbs of London. In the summer he was fond of country excursions, and for one entire summer, as I have heard him say, he and one or two companions lived in a tent on the coast, I think, near Ramsgate, where they hired a boat and spent days in sailing; and, from the mode in which this summer was passed, he probably found an advantage when illustrating 'Robinson Crusoe.'

Among the great painters of whom I have been speaking, it is gratifying to observe that Stothard and Wilkie were both students, and very assiduous students of this Academy. Flaxman and Chantrey also learned all that an Academy could teach them within the walls of Somerset House—and were I permitted to mention the names of living artists who have acquired the elements of their Art within the Academy, a list highly honorable to the Institution could be made out. —I call your attention to these facts, because Academies are sometimes compared to Colleges, and the inference is, that as Colleges can do little towards producing Poets, Academies can do little towards producing Painters. It should be remembered however, that Poetry makes use of the language that is common to all; and though the refinements of that language may not be acquired without books, yet books are not confined to Colleges. The Painter, the Sculptor, and the Architect, on the other hand, have to acquire the mastery of a language of their own, involving many studies and much mechanical practice. These can only be acquired in a school, and under the guidance of experienced teachers; and though Academies can neither create genius nor supply patronage, the two conditions necessary to the existence of Art, they may materially assist both.

I believe that it will be found generally that what is called *Academic Art* (by way of disparagement,) in other words *learned mediocrity*, has preceded their formation; and that when original genius has afterwards appeared, it has always been benefitted by them. Lebrun, with all his talents, was, in the ordinary sense of the words, an *academic artist*, and he was so before the establishment of the French Academy. Some time after that institution had been in operation, Watteau appeared; not that Watteau was formed by the Academy, for he was formed by the study of Nature engrafted on the art of Rubens—but the Academy did not hinder his appearance, nor destroy him after he became one of its members.

But I will go farther back. Neither Raphael nor Michael Angelo were able to transmit the essence of their art to their pupils. The art of Raphael died with him, and if it has in later schools in any degree revived, it has done so chiefly in Academies. Michael Angelo, with all the pains he took, was unable to make an historical painter of Sebastian del Piombo, whose genius could not rise above dignified portrait; and Vassari, also the scholar and enthusiastic admirer of Michael Angelo, became but the founder of a school of machinists.

The obligations of Hogarth and of Reynolds to academies have been denied. Hogarth, indeed, did not acquire his Imagination, his inexhaustible fertility of Invention, his humor or his pathos in an academy; but he acquired his knowledge of the human figure (without which all these qualities must have remained unknown to the world) in the subscription academy opened by Sir James Thornhill. It is very true that Reynolds had not studied in an academy. But it was a cause to him of lamentation, not of boasting. Hear his own modest words—"Not having the advantage of an early academic education," he says, "I never had the facility of drawing the naked figure which an artist ought to have." After this we may fairly say, when we are told of eminent artists who have not studied in academies, that it would have been better for them if they had done so.

It has been said by a modern opponent of all such Institutions that "to produce other Raphaels they must go through the same process that Raphael himself went through."—This I believe; but I believe also that the process must be gone through with powers of mind and delicacy of taste equal to Raphael's; and then I doubt not but that the success may be as complete in a modern academy as it was in the school of Perugino.

* The original pictures from the 'Pilgrim's Progress' are in the collection of Mr. S. Jones Loyd, who also possesses the finest of the larger works of Stothard with which I am acquainted, the 'Jacob's Dream.'

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE BULLETIN.

[In publishing the following criticisms on the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we by no means fully endorse them. They are written by a new correspondent, a young American artist of promise, who states candidly what we believe are his sincere opinions. We desire that our journal should be the field of fair and frank discussion upon all questions connected with the Arts, and, therefore, we give a place to these letters, although they take, as we think, too low a view of the English school, and particularly of some of its more recent manifestations.]

EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY—No I.

One needs but to look around the Exhibition of the Royal Academy to become convinced of the inability of an Academy conducted on the principles of this to promote the advancement of Art. A school conducted like that of Düsseldorf may be efficacious, but an institution of which the object is not to train its members in the principles of Art, but to honor by a title a chosen few, cannot.

Be that as it may, the great event of the season has arrived, and the Royal Academy, the greatest—if we may believe its own testimony—and the most useless, excepting our own—of the age, has thrown open its doors to the public, on paying one shilling for admittance. One feels at a loss what to consider the characteristic of the English school. They claim color, and from the extravagant laudations he sees occasionally in the English journals, a person who has not the opportunity of correcting these impressions by sight, might get the idea that Etty, Frost and Pickersgill were really hard upon Titian. I can imagine no justification for such ruling, except the excessive vanity of the English as a nation, and their obstinate blindness to the merits of all other schools. In looking for some term which shall express the impression with which English Art strikes me, I can find nothing so apt as that which occurred in one of the papers not long since—"The perfection of mediocrity." It expresses all that there is notable in it. On entering the rooms, one looks in vain for some idea of greatness—something which he shall desire never to forget. You carry away no impression, except a confused one of nude women, muddy color, mingled with faint recollections of Gil Blas, Don Quixote, The Vicar of Wakefield, &c. Of landscape—a branch in which the English are great, as far as talent can be great, and in Turner great to the height of genius—I do not speak at present; but from those branches which they include under the general term of higher Art, the unavoidable impression is, that there is a total lack of genius, and that very little of the talent is of a high order. Mediocrity stares you in the face on every side. It is hard to say anything of such a collection, excepting as a whole: the continual picking out faults becomes irksome to both critic and reader, and *beauties* it is hard to find.

The figure pictures are mainly of an order which the Spectator dubs with the title of story pictures, being those which, not aspiring to the title of historical, yet form part of a narrative. Of this class of painters, Leslie seems to be acknowledged as the head. He is represented by three pictures—*Beatrice*, from Much Ado About